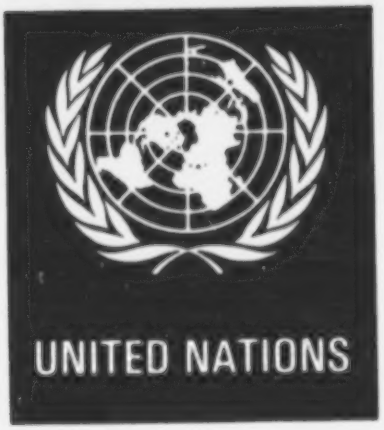

DIVISION FOR
PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

TENTH UNITED NATIONS NORTH AMERICAN NGO SYMPOSIUM ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Tenth United Nations Regional NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine was held under the auspices of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People at United Nations Headquarters, New York, from 30 June to 2 July 1993, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/64 A of 11 December 1992. The theme of the Symposium was "Building for peace and Palestine: priorities for the second decade of the NGO movement".

2. A total of 56 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from Canada and the United States of America, 7 of them as observers, participated in the work of the Symposium. Nine panelists as well as 20 workshop facilitators and resource persons made presentations. The opening and closing meetings were chaired by H.E. Mr. Alcibiades J. Hidalgo Basulto (Cuba), Vice Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. The Symposium was moderated by Mr. Larry Ekin, Chairman of the North American Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (NACC). Ms. Colleen McGuire and Ms. Nancy Murray moderated individual panels. The work of the Symposium was organized in five plenary meetings as well as workshops.

3. At the first plenary, entitled "Building for peace and Palestine: priorities for the second decade of the NGO movement", presentations were made by Mr. Don Betz, Chairman of the International Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine and Vice-President of University Relations at Northeastern State University, Oklahoma; Mr. Paul Findley, former member of the United States House of Representatives; and, Mr. Asmi Bishara, Professor of Philosophy at Bir Zeit University.

4. At the second plenary, entitled "Rights, resources, refugees: the need for protection", presentations were made by Mr. Jonathan Kuttab, a human rights lawyer and Director of the Mandela Institute for Political Prisoners in the West Bank, and Mr. Muhammad Hallaj, Director of the Centre for Policy Analysis on Palestine and a member of the Palestine National Council.

5. At the third plenary, entitled "Ending the occupation: a prelude to peace and security", presentations were made by Ms. Roni Ben Efrat, an Israeli peace activist, a founding member of "Women in Black" and also a member of the editorial staff of Etgar/Challenge magazine; Mr. Muhammad Hallaj; and, Mr. Atif Kubursi, Professor of Economics at McMaster University, Canada, and advisor on refugee issues to the Minister of External Affairs of Canada.

6. The fourth plenary heard reports and recommendations from the five workshops of the Symposium and the seven standing committees established by NACC to strengthen NGO coordination and cooperation (see annexes II and III).

7. The fifth plenary entitled "NGO priorities for the second decade", heard statements from: Mr. Don Betz; Ms. Mia Adjali, Director of the United Methodist Office for the United Nations; and Mr. Jim Graff, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Toronto and Vice Chairman of NACC.

8. Five workshops were held on the following topics:

I. Media skills and stereotypes;

II. The Clinton Administration and the United States Congress: Assessing the opportunities;

III. Assuming protection: United Nations and the Fourth Geneva Convention;

IV. Seeds of a new society: The welfare of women and children under occupation;

V. Refugees and invisible transfers.

9. The participants elected a new coordinating committee for the North American region (see annex V) and charged it with preparing a final statement to guide NGO action for the future (see annex I).

I. OPENING STATEMENTS

10. Mr. Basulto, Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, in his opening statement, said that while the peace negotiations initiated in Madrid may have achieved no concrete results as yet, nevertheless, the very fact that talks are progressing under the auspices of the United States of America and the Russian Federation gives hope that progress will be made towards the negotiation of a just and peaceful settlement of the Palestine question.

11. Mr. Basulto stressed, however, that despite the ongoing peace process, the living conditions of the Palestinian people have deteriorated considerably. Israel's prolonged and indefinite closure of the West Bank and Gaza, together with the isolation of East Jerusalem since 30 March 1993 have been damaging and disruptive. The Israeli policy of collective punishment has restricted the daily movement of millions of Palestinians, thus depriving them of access to health-care facilities, food, employment and education as well as access to places of worship in Jerusalem.

12. Mr. Basulto went on to say that as a result of current Israeli policy, some 100,000 Palestinians employed in Israel and East Jerusalem have suffered an abrupt loss of income. The occupied territory has been virtually fragmented into four separate sectors, each inaccessible to the others without hard-to-obtain permits. In addition, Palestinians are confronted with ever-increasing repression and violation of their human rights by the occupying forces. Such violations have been strongly condemned by the international community as they are in direct contravention of the Fourth Geneva Convention, international human rights instruments and relevant Security Council resolutions, the latest being resolutions 681 (1990) and 799 (1992).

13. Mr. Basulto referred to the important role played by the extensive network of NGOs in heightening awareness and in mobilizing international opinion in support of a peace process that would lead to the attainment of Palestinian rights. He stressed the great importance that the Committee attaches to the central role played by NGOs as valued partners who not only monitor, but also contribute to the implementation of United Nations principles and objectives.

14. Mr. Larry Ekin, Chairman of NACC, reviewed NGO activity on behalf of the Palestinian people since the 1948 war and afterwards, when it came to be acknowledged that the Palestinian question was not merely a temporary refugee crisis. During the 1960s those organizations increasingly tended to focus on community programmes rather than individual needs. Following the Israeli occupation, NGOs recognized the increasing need to support Palestinian national rights. But while the necessity for such support has increased, available resources have tended to diminish. Many activities of NGOs have been scaled down since the beginning of the Madrid peace process. While this is so, an imperative for cooperation has emerged. Many Israeli NGOs have expressed the wish to be associated with the international movement. In addition, a Palestinian non-governmental movement is developing towards what Mr. Ekin described as "democracy at its best".

15. The constant state of crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory makes evident the need for more effective cooperative and coordinated mechanisms for supporting Palestinians in their struggle to establish their own State. Mr. Ekin went on to say that all settlement activity must be halted and adherence to the basic principles of human rights and international law promoted.

16. In reviewing recent activities undertaken by the NGO Coordinating Committee, he said that a "fax tree" had been established which served as a valuable information network. Opinion and protest could be immediately relayed. A women's resource directory was also being created. While these activities were encouraging, coordination with international, Israeli and Palestinian NGOs must be strengthened.

17. Mr. Nasser Al-Kidwa, Permanent Observer for Palestine to the United Nations, read out a message from Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The message is reproduced in annex IV.

II. PLENARY DISCUSSION

A. Plenary I

"Building for peace and Palestine: priorities for the second decade of the NGO movement"

18. Mr. Don Betz reviewed developments since the convening of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine at Geneva in 1983 and the subsequent establishment of the International Coordinating Committee. He described how the NGO agenda had expanded and how today such matters as national development, self-determination, and preservation and protection of human rights were taken up by the NGO community. In many ways the United Nations and NGOs have increasingly influenced each other's agenda over the past ten years, he said.

19. Mr. Betz spoke of the continuing lack of financial resources and stressed the importance of cooperation among the some 1,300 organizations that now express their concern about the question of Palestine. In the forthcoming decade it is vital that NGOs make full use of new information systems. Already, work has been transformed by the availability of fax technology. But this can be still further enhanced by use of newer technology.

20. Mr. Betz also urged that as a movement and as a network, NGO support should be given to the February 1993 decision of the United Nations Human Rights Commission to appoint a Special Rapporteur "to investigate Israel's violations of the principles and bases of international law, international humanitarian law, and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War in the Palestinian territory occupied by Israel since 1967". Every support should be given to the Special Rapporteur, Mr. René Felber, a former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland.

21. He went on to say that while many NGOs had been both attracted and distracted by the peace process begun in Madrid, it was important that they retain their focus on the preservation of the national identity of Palestinians and their human rights. These rights are violated every day. NGOs must speak out against these inequities and continue to work with a resolve and zeal equal to that of the Palestinians themselves.

22. Mr. Paul Findley referred to recent events in New York City which, he said, had now experienced what he termed the "gnawing anxiety" and sporadic violence that has been an inescapable part of life in the Middle East. While the response of most Americans has been a protest of innocence, he suggested that they seemed not to know that the United States has been Israel's primary supporter and ally despite its violation of international law and Palestinian human rights.

23. Mr. Findley said there was little sign of Americans awakening to realization of their Government's role in supporting Israel. More violence was not the remedy. While Arab grievances are thoroughly understandable, bombings and wanton killings would be worse than futile. Since American reaction to such further bombings would be intense and one-sided, he suggested that a more promising response would be a broad, urgent educational campaign to acquaint the American people with their own complicity in Israel's longstanding violation of human rights.

24. America must demand that all aid to Israel stop until that country stopped occupying Arab land. However, there was little hope that elected leaders would muster the courage to act until they heard what he described as "a powerful demand from the countryside". It was his view that policy makers were being influenced by people who have a long history of bias for Israel.

25. Thus, the work of NGOs was crucial. The burden was on their shoulders more than on those of diplomats. The most critical battles for justice for Palestinians "must be fought and won in the American countryside, and not in the Middle East", he concluded.

26. Mr. Asmi Bishara said the closure of the occupied territory, including Jerusalem, had resulted in the lowering of the living standards of the Palestinian people. That action was being taken to ensure there would be no victims on the Israeli side, he said. Israel was no longer a strategic asset in the current unipolar world. Yet, that did not mean that the United States would pressure Israel to support the peace process. Since the Gulf war, the United States needs Israel more than before, he said.

27. Mr. Bishara commented that an Israeli negotiator had remarked that the Palestinians had an advantage in the negotiations since they knew what they wanted, while Israel did not. There was no possibility that a transitional period of autonomy would result in a Palestinian State since usually temporary arrangements were based on the framework of the permanent solutions.

28. In his view what was now being experienced in the occupied Palestinian territory was worse than conditions under the earlier Israeli Administration. He stressed the necessity of preserving equality. The alternatives could only be a Palestinian State or a bi-national State with two autonomies, Jewish and Palestinian.

B. Plenary II

"Rights, resources, refugees: the need for protection"

29. Mr. Jonathan Kuttab was of the view that collective action by NGOs could go far in improving the well-being of Palestinians. Although their relief efforts had always been limited, pioneering work can still be initiated and seed money offered for creative projects. NGOs could also be a source of moral authority which could influence political developments.

30. He went on to say that the NGO community could exert considerable influence by gathering and disseminating truthful information, and by countering disinformation emanating from the occupation authorities which often went uncontested.

31. He urged that in seeking a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, NGOs should emphasize the relevance of the application of human rights and international law. Such an approach may be distinct from that being made in the Middle East peace process initiated at Madrid. Their strength remains in seeking equality before the law and maintaining the rights of the individual.

32. Mr. Kuttab cautioned NGOs that they should not allow those who did not share their values to set the NGO agenda. He went on to review how to his mind those who had joined the present Israeli Government now supported its policies, in particular with regard to settlement activity, which was increasingly aimed at providing a legal, administrative and economic infrastructure to give settlers permanent status in what amounts to a de jure apartheid. He reaffirmed that the Jewish settlements are illegal and an obstacle to peace, but as yet, the NGO community has not yet acted in a creative and concerted fashion to exhort the Israeli Government to end this policy.

33. Mr. Kuttab concluded by saying that in his view the NGO community, while addressing the Palestinian-Israeli struggle, had not polarized the issue. They neither demonized the oppressors nor sided uncritically with the oppressed. Still, they were not without power to change current realities.

34. Mr. Muhammad Hallaj said that since the beginning of the Madrid peace process, the plight of Palestine refugees had been relegated to the exclusive context of multilateral talks which address regional issues and regional cooperation. To place the refugee issue in such a multilateral context suggests, to Mr. Hallaj, that it might well be proposed at some time that Palestinians be settled outside their own homeland.

35. He said that during the second round of talks, the Israeli delegation had urged that the issue of family unification be deleted from the agenda. The Israeli delegation had not attended the first round when the item had indeed been included and remarked later that had they been there, they would not have allowed its inclusion.

36. In his view, the particular allocation of the refugee subject for discussion during the peace process makes its clear that Israel had not yet reconciled itself to the fact that the refugee question is central to the negotiation process in that while this is a national political question, it has nevertheless a tragic humanitarian component.

37. The Palestine refugees should not be thought of as people living in camps on the outskirts of towns but instead should be viewed as fragments of a shattered nation. Unfortunately, the tendency to consider their plight as a humanitarian rather than a political issue still persists.

38. Regarding related activities of NGOs, he stressed the importance of public education. He suggested that in the United States, the process of informing the public about the Palestinians might not be as formidable as it appeared. A recent opinion poll had indicated American support for the Palestinians' right of return to their homeland.

C. Plenary III

"Ending the occupation: a prelude to peace and security"

39. Ms. Roni Ben Efrat expressed the view that the Israeli occupation of 1967 had immediately and understandably led to a counteraction that will, in its own turn, result in defeat of the occupation.

40. Speaking as a member of the Israeli opposition, she said that the Rabin Government had inherited a previous policy. The mass deportations and the closure of the occupied territory were intended to force what has been termed "autonomy" on the Palestinian people. But that, in her view, could never result in proper self-determination. The Washington round of peace talks had not ended with any positive result. In her opinion, Palestinians should reject the autonomy plan.

41. Although the closure may have begun as an intermediate tactical answer to a wave of violence, to Ms. Efrat it now had become the strategic outline of Israel's proposed solution. In effect, the closure now laid out the map of the autonomy plan under negotiation in the ongoing peace process. The closure has in essence divided Palestinians among four distinct territories devoid of a capital. Jerusalem is now cut off from other parts of the occupied territory.

42. Ms. Efrat made the point that Jewish democratic forces were currently active and in that connection she cited the work of the Arab-Jewish Committee against Deportation.

43. Mr. Muhammad Hallaj referred to the current status of peace negotiations. In his opinion, the inclusion of a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation negates the very concept of a separate Palestinian national identity. Palestinians were presented as an ethnic minority within Israeli society.

44. In addition, the peace process had excluded many matters that were extremely important to Palestinians and here he particularly cited the issue of Jerusalem as non-negotiable. Other issues of great importance to Palestinians had been relegated to what has been termed "final status" discussion. He disagreed with the view that no subject had been excluded from the talks but had instead been postponed for later.

45. Mr. Hallaj took the view that the peace process as currently organized would not pave the way for Palestinian self-determination. Unfortunately, when Palestinians sought to change the methods and subject of negotiation they were said to be standing in the way of progress. He suggested that NGOs should endeavour to educate the general public about this discrepancy and at the same time urge governments to reform the methods of the negotiating process.

46. Mr. Atif Kubursi described the Israeli occupation as colonial exploitation. He particularly concentrated on exploitation of a vital natural resource, water. Less than 17 per cent of usable water was now available to Palestinians, he said, since it had either been intercepted or diverted for Israeli use.

47. He described how production of fruits and vegetables had been curtailed and was controlled by quotas. He said that the most fertile land had been taken over and given to the Israeli settlers in the occupied territories. Meanwhile, Palestinian labourers had to travel in the early hours to earn wages at the lowest level of Israeli standards, while frequently being denied social services and benefits. He mentioned that the Gaza fishing industry, which had flourished in the past, was now targeted since limits were put on the shoreline use for fishing.

48. A sustainable peace could not be reached based on such a system, he said. Palestinians must be given a chance to participate in the improvement of their economy. Such a policy would require outright independence and rehabilitation of the productive sector. Also needed was the control of resources, such as water; the development of export markets, particularly in the Arab world and in the European community; the establishment of a central government to implement socio-economic policy; and the investment of private savings into the economy.

D. Plenary IV

49. At its fourth plenary meeting, the participants in the North American Symposium heard reports and recommendations from its five workshops which are contained in annex II.

50. The participants also heard preliminary reports from the seven newly-established standing committees and asked that NACC issue a final statement (see annex I and annex III).

51. The participants elected a new coordinating committee for the North American region for the years 1993-1994 (see annex V).

E. Plenary V

"NGO priorities for the second decade"

52. Mr. Don Betz referred to the multiplicity of priorities for the forthcoming decade. In connection with the database currently being established in the Division for Palestinian Rights, he urged that NGOs be collectively involved with its implementation. He also spoke about the need for NGOs to provide information to the special rapporteur appointed by the Human Rights Commission to investigate violations of human rights in the occupied territory. He also called for improved coordination among NGOs. Given diminishing resources, the NGO fax network was important to international understanding of Palestinian issues, and use should be made of new electronic technology.

53. Ms. Mia Adjali referred to the difficulties presented for the religious communities in explaining the Palestinian question since there was a significant, what she termed "conservative", segment in many denominations. In this context she cited a study put out by the National Council of Churches concerning the Christian presence in the Middle East, which had served to inform religious groups in the United States.

54. She stressed that local "grass-roots" groups should be represented in workshops and in standing committees.

55. Mr. Jim Graff, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Toronto and Vice-Chairman of NACC, said NGOs seemed to be faced with "a crisis of direction" in how to act in a unipolar world following the Gulf war. Before the war, it had seemed that there would be a breakthrough on the Palestinian problem.

56. The commitment to the ideal of the equality of all people was the underlying moral ideal of human rights law and the Charter of the United Nations. NGOs faced the challenge of doing what they could to make the equal worth and dignity of persons a reality. They could join together under that broad commitment as elaborated in international human rights law. NGOs should support the Palestinian right to self-determination, including the right to establish their own State, and the right to compensation of those who could not return.

57. The call for an international peace conference was based on the equal worth and dignity of the human person, he went on to say. The Palestinian right to self-determination was a principle which could not be denied. NGOs could agree on basic principles, a unifying factor, while not meddling in politics, which they were not equipped to do. Ideologically, NGOs were gathered together in principle; in the future, if reality took the course that was feared, then NGOs must focus on the problem as an anti-apartheid struggle.

58. On the organizational level, he said, standing committees were a way to maximize talents within a tight economic situation. More experts could be brought in that way. NGOs should determine which committees they would fit into. It was a way to enhance outreach and effectiveness. If mechanism and motivation could be harnessed together with motivation stemming from agreed principles then NGOs could be effective.

II. CLOSING STATEMENTS

59. Mr. Larry Ekin, Chairman of NACC, said that new initiatives had been set in motion by the creation of standing committees. While work would be continued by the newly-elected Coordinating Committee, the idea of convening a conference focusing on the question of Jerusalem should be explored.

60. In adopting, without a vote, a proposal of its standing committee on mobilizing religious organizations, the Symposium had recognized that the issue of Jerusalem was vital to the continuation of the peace process. Such a conference might be co-sponsored in 1994 with NGOs. It could be funded by interested NGOs, religious organizations and other sources. A recommendation on this matter would be presented to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

61. Rev. Ibrahim Ayad, Chairman of the Palestine Committee for NGOs, said the new world order had not brought what the world was expecting; it had only produced more deaths and wars. The events in many regions, including Palestine, were a clear indication of the failure of the new order.

62. Many crimes were committed on the pretext of protecting human rights, he went on to say. In the case of Palestinians in the occupied territories, a massacre was taking place, accompanied by the silence of other States as well as churches and human rights organizations.

63. The peace negotiations had produced no tangible results due to the biased stance of one of the co-sponsors of the peace process. Therefore, NGOs had to play an important role as the conscience of their States and as agents to mobilize international public opinion to protect Palestinians.

64. Mr. Alcibiades Hidalgo Basulto, Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, stated that the Committee believes that NGOs could play a very important role in the international effort to achieve United Nations objectives on the question of Palestine. The task of mobilizing public opinion was more vital today than ever before, particularly as the conditions for the Palestinian people under occupation has deteriorated and violations of human rights and international law continued to occur. NGOs could count on the Committee for support and collaboration, in carrying out their mandates.

Annex I

SUMMARY STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE NORTH AMERICAN COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR NGOs ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE ON THE OCCASION OF THE TENTH UNITED NATIONS NORTH AMERICAN NGO SYMPOSIUM ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

Our North American NGO movement: what future?

In lieu of a final declaration, participants at the Tenth United Nations North American NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine requested that the newly-elected coordinating committee be entrusted with drafting a summary statement. This follows a practice established several years ago.

Charting the future for our NGO movement requires analysis of the present political situation, mapping morally acceptable options by which to judge likely scenarios, clarifying the principles which unite us, and recommending structural changes which will help us fulfill our mandate.

The United States and Israel may soon be ready to dictate the terms of a peace agreement outside the United Nations framework. Unless the Arab representatives withdraw from this process, the United Nations-sponsored peace conference will no longer be a supportable option, and the United Nations-related mandates of our coordinating committees, our symposia and, therefore, much of what sustains our movement, will collapse. We must redefine our mandate based on those ideals and principles which the United Nations peace conference was intended to honour, not on the call for the peace conference itself.

The minimal coordinating structures we have established are at risk. Given the ongoing financial crisis, the International Coordinating Committee may close, and the North American office finds it difficult to support even one part-time staff member. Unless we redefine our mandate, the rationale for the United Nations-sponsored meetings crucial to our movement are likely to evaporate, and we could dissolve into the constituent networks and isolated organizations out of which we came. During our Tenth Symposium, Mr. Mohammad Hallaj, Mr. Jonathan Kuttab, Professor Asmi Bishara, and other speakers addressed the political, financial and ideological crises we face, and in doing so, helped point us back to the principles which lie at the core of our mandate and which can guide us as a movement through the next decade of our work.

The same ideals and principles that originally inspired our work and commitment and which underlie our current mandate can form the basis for our renewed mandate. The ideal of respect for the equal worth and dignity of persons is the cornerstone of not only the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and all contemporary instruments of international human rights law, but also of a host of politically important rights and principles. They include: 1) The right of subjugated, colonized and oppressed peoples to self-determination; 2) The rights of the forcibly displaced and dispossessed to return, to restitution and to compensation; 3) The principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war; 4) The principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition by force or coercion of natural and human resources; and 5) The rights of children and their families to pursue humanly decent futures within a free and psychologically

healthy environment. These ideals and principles can likewise determine the character of morally acceptable options for the Palestinians and for the Jewish Israeli communities.

Applying these broad moral conceptions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict leads us to accept the premise that morally acceptable settlements must accommodate the equal rights of individuals of both the Jewish Israeli and Palestinian communities. These conceptions require fully democratic political arrangements embodying respect for the equal worth and dignity of persons without regard to ethnicity, national origin, cultural heritage, religion, or gender. Unfortunately, likely political scenarios fall short of these requirements.

If this proves correct, then we are confronted by a long, perhaps multi-generational struggle to assist the Palestinian community in its efforts to preserve itself intact and to flourish in Palestine. As a complement, we must also assist those Jewish Israelis striving to build a truly democratic Israel. Our political and practical focus must be clearly and openly anti-segregationist and anti-apartheid. To do this, we need to strengthen and redefine our links with the United Nations whose ideals should remain, in a more clearly articulated form, the basis of our movement.

We suggest that we accept as our mission, working for the full implementation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the relevant General Assembly resolutions and the instruments of international human rights law. We suggest that the Division for Palestinian Rights should become a repository for data and should be empowered to collect and secure appropriate documentation bearing upon the status and the rights of the Palestinian people. It should sponsor, in continuing cooperation with the various coordinating committees, both specialized and general meetings of NGOs working to promote the inalienable human rights of the Palestinians.

Our continuing work in cooperation with the Division should emphasize:
1) Development and humanitarian aid aimed at assisting the Palestinian community to preserve itself and to flourish as a community with national rights; 2) The status of that community with regard to human rights and the protections, rights and obligations required by relevant instruments of international law. Furthermore, the United Nations, with our cooperation, should sponsor other professionally-oriented NGO meetings in which relevant United Nations agencies participate. The annual international and regional symposia should evolve towards becoming general meetings aimed at updating information and understanding, developing and coordinating strategy, and setting feasible objectives for annual review.

The Standing Committee structure we adopted is designed to broaden responsibility, encourage greater NGO participation, improve our ability to share the costs of coordinating activities, and enhance the effectiveness of our work. These committees allow us to co-opt interested organizations whose mandates and work would be enhanced by cooperation, professional exchanges, outreach and access to others' networks. Our Standing Committees have begun working towards these ends. At least one member of the North American Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (NACC) serves on each Standing Committee, providing the link between the NACC and those committees.

As a movement, we have a full agenda for the next decade and beyond. In fuller cooperation with the United Nations, we intend to continue to work and strengthen our alliances with those engaged in the struggle to uphold the democratic, anti-apartheid principles at the core of the NGO movement.

Annex II

WORKSHOP REPORTS

Workshop I: Media: Skills and stereotypes

The workshop issued the following report:

There was a clear sense from those participating in the standing committee and at the workshop on media that NGOs need to take a more proactive approach to the media. It was also expressed that there needs to be an apparatus to focus solely on the media and Palestinians. Thirdly the power of NACC stems from our constitution as a broad and diverse group of NGOs from many regions: interaction with the media from this standpoint can be formidable.

A primary goal of the standing committee on media will be to cultivate personal contacts with the media and to share with these contacts information sent by our NGO sources in the West Bank and Gaza. Participants voiced concerned that such up-to-date information from foreign sources tends to be circulated amongst our own constituencies instead of getting directed to the media. The committee intends to actively seek out information from such groups as CCINGO and to disseminate the materials into a form tailored for particular media outlets. As part of a proactive approach, and in conjunction with cultivating media contacts, increased efforts must be made to submit op-ed pieces in local papers. In addition to overseas sources, we should also take advantage of local resource persons by seeking input from those, such as scholars, who have detailed working background knowledge. A directory of foreign and domestic (United States and Canada) resource organizations and persons must be drawn up. Additionally, a directory of persons whom the media can call for interviews or information should be made available to NGOs. Also, the media committee must be in contact with the other standing committees to access their information, as well as reach out to those persons or organizations (who did not come to the Symposium) whose work would dovetail with the committee's. At the workshop, a fax tree was proposed which would respond to disinformation or biases in the form of "mini-campaigns". Fax participants would alert NGOs to a particular article or broadcast and a unified response could be made by dozens of NGOs, as well as on NACC letterhead.

The point of the standing committee on media is for NGOs to take on the media in a collective and concerted fashion. The shortcoming of this standing committee is that no specific mechanism was drawn up for communication amongst participating NGOs. A list of those attending, however, was gathered and it will be incumbent upon the coordinators to report back to this group, and to coalesce an agenda for unified action. Jerry Levine of World Vision and Colleen McGuire of the National Lawyers Guild were selected as coordinators.

Note: The group felt that dealing with the media is a huge project in and of itself, and that this committee is realistically not in a position to take on the task of a public education agenda as well.

Workshop II: The Clinton Administration and the United States Congress: Assessing the opportunities

Ms. Nancy Nye, resource person for the workshop, began with the appropriate quote concerning our role vis-à-vis the Clinton Administration: "Sometimes we are confronted with insurmountable opportunities".

Ms. Nye asked the workshop participants to list both what gives us hope and what we find discouraging about Congress and the Clinton Administration.

1. Administration - negative

   (a) Martin Indyk's appointment;
   (b) Clinton's promise to maintain aid to Israel and Egypt;
   (c) Bombing of Baghdad;
   (d) Little or no leverage applied on human rights violators
   (e) The Administration's change in policy on settlements and possibly on the status of the territories.

2. Administration - positive

   (a) Clinton is intelligent and has the potential to be educated;
   (b) Human rights post (John Shattuck) was a good appointment;
   (c) Pressure on Israel to give greater attention to its nuclear arsenal;
   (d) Greater access to the Administration from voices concerned with Palestinian human rights.

3. Congress - negative

   (a) Many foreign aid programmes cut - only four sustained, two of which include Israel and Egypt;
   (b) "Anti-terrorism" legislation, with adverse implications for Arab-American civil rights.

4. Congress - positive

   (a) More diverse;
   (b) Attention given to campaign finance reform (and the impact on pro-Israel PACs and funding);
   (c) Lee Hamilton and his primary legislative aide, Mike Van Duesen, at the helm of the Foreign Affairs Committee;
   (d) Congress is being attentive to the public's concern over foreign aid, particularly Senator Leahy and Congressman Obey.

How do we create opportunities?:

1. Get to know our congresspeople and their staff in the district; develop a positive relationship.
2. Inroads to churches, pay attention and submit articles and letters to local press.

3. Do not embarrass or anger a member of Congress - it will make them unlikely to change their mind.

Specific current legislation to be concerned about:

1. Immigration and anti-terrorism bills;
2. Appropriation bill and especially loan guarantee review;
3. Press for greater accountability of Israel to the United States (treat Israel and Egypt like the rest of the world).

Workshop III: Assuring protection: United Nations resolutions and the Fourth Geneva Convention

The stated goal of workshop III was to try and evaluate the role of NACC in the enforcement of United Nations resolutions and the Fourth Geneva Convention. After an introductory analysis of the mechanism of international law and the enforcement possibilities, it was decided that there are three roles for the NGO community in the enforcement of international law. The NGO movement can do the following:

1. Collect and document credible information and disseminate it widely;

2. Implicate third parties involved, countries that supply weapons, financial aid, trade, should be held accountable for the actions of the country in violation of international law;

3. People-oriented campaigns (i.e. South Africa); if you are unable to implement legislative change or government pressure, organize a grass-roots campaign. Action: include boycotts of social, arts, sports and musical events.

It was decided that given the resources available, the most feasible route for the workshop participants was to focus on the implementation/education of international law through grass-roots action.

A system was established designed to bring about protection: (a) target specific/ concrete issues; (b) focus your appeal on international law; (c) develop a grass-roots response.

It was decided that the most crucial issue to focus on was settlements. Settlements were chosen because of their absolute illegality, the fact that many Israelis do not support them, and the fact that it is a clearly racist and discriminatory policy.

We resolve to coordinate a sustained protest around the country as the Israeli Philharmonic tours this summer. We will introduce the idea to NACC at the final plenary on Friday, 2 July.

The workshop also resolved to introduce the concept of grass-roots action to the Standing Committee on Human Rights and International Law with the hope that it will be adopted as an integral strategy in their work.

Workshop IV: Seeds of a new society: the welfare of women and children under occupation

Goals:

1. To reach out to women's groups, i.e. denominational women, human rights (women and children), the League of Women's Voters, to educate and to raise consciousness.

2. To maintain communication between women's groups in a minimal way.

3. Identify other women's groups not specifically interested in Palestinian issues.

4. Appeal to other women's groups when Palestinian women are the target. Strategy for action: Assist in giving notice of groups coming from Palestine to itinerate North America - many NGO groups would keep sponsor events.

5. Participate in the Women's Directory.

6. Develop a fax tree for this Standing Committee.

Workshop V: Refugees and invisible transfers

Twelve participants had an intensive opportunity to learn anew about the plight of the Palestinian people which views itself, in its entirety, as a refugee people whether they live within or outside their land.

With the assistance of two highly-qualified experts who served as resource persons, Dr. Atif Kubursi and Ms. Beth Goldring, the workshop understood something of the complexity of the issue: systematic economic and social fragmentation of the Palestinian population, its family structure and its societal organization.

The workshop participants pledged themselves to monitor and try to make an impact on the refugee policy/immigration laws of our own Governments and to continue to engage in advocacy on behalf of the Palestinian people.

Annex III

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

For several years, the affiliates of the North American Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (NACC) have expressed a willingness to pursue more coordinated and cooperative endeavours. This is seen as a result of two major factors. First, 10 years of NACC activity have resulted in a greater sense of trust and mutual confidence among NACC constituents. Along these lines, NACC affiliates began to realize the potential impact of coordinated campaigns. At the same time, virtually every NGO faces increasing economic constraints. Thus, the incentive to avoid duplication and work in complementary fashion is high.

In the light of these dynamics, the NACC Steering Committee reached a decision during its Winter 1993 meeting to initiate a series of Standing Committees. During its discussion, NACC defined the following goals for the Standing Committees:

- The Standing Committees should serve as a means to broaden the day-to-day participation of constituent members in developing and conducting coordinated campaigns and other activities;

- The Standing Committees should provide a means for utilizing the particular expertise and/or interests of NACC-affiliated NGOs;

- The Standing Committees should provide a means of enhancing the work of NACC through the sharing of information and resources;

- The Standing Committees should help provide a sense of continuity and accountability to the NACC constituency from one symposium to the next;

- The Standing Committees should provide a means for NGOs that may be unable to unwilling to formally affiliate with NACC to coordinate with NACC through sharing information and coordinating campaigns and other means that may be determined by the Standing Committees.

- The Standing Committees should assist NACC by identifying NGOs that may be interested in participating in particular campaigns or becoming part of the NACC network.

Some NGOs may wish to be involved in the work of more than one Standing Committee. Others may desire to concentrate their efforts in one.

Each Standing Committee will be facilitated/chaired by an elected member of the NACC Steering Committee. For 1993/1994, the following Standing Committees will be developed:

(i) Human rights and international law;
(ii) Government policy;
(iii) Public education and the media;
(iv) Material aid and economic development;
(v) Mobilizing women's organizations;
(vi) Mobilizing religious organizations;
(vii) Mobilizing labour.

During this year, it is strongly recommended that no additional Standing Committees be added. The work and achievements of the Standing Committees and NACC's ability to sustain their work will be evaluated after one year.

(i) Human rights and international law

The Standing Committee on Human Rights and International Law has been designed to act as a resource to NACC. The long-range goal of the committee is to develop an accountable organ to NACC that would be able to address the human rights issues in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The Standing Committee on Human Rights and International Law was coordinated by Jim Graff with the Near East Cultural and Educational Foundation of Canada and Peter Lems of the Palestine Human Rights Information Center International. The Committee benefited from the contribution of several international human rights organizations that have never in the past affiliated with NACC.

The primary resource person was Melissa Phillips, United States Field Representative for the Center for Human Rights Enforcement. Ms. Phillips delivered a paper, "Humanitarian and human rights laws applicable to the occupied Palestinian territories: An overview of the principal instruments". The paper outlined the methods for assuring protection for the Palestinian people and the mechanisms for enforcement.

Because of the large number of participants, the interest of the committee was identified to be based on three distinct agendas: (a) Organizations working on human rights documentation; (b) Organizations working on advocacy; and (c) Organizations working on intervention. Substantial overlap exists among the various categories, and it was clear that there would be room for lateral movement inside the larger organizations.

The points resolved were as follows:

(a) Establish a booklet of organizations participating in the work of the Standing Committee on Human Rights and International Law;

(b) Develop a mechanism to produce op-ed pieces on a quarterly basis. These papers could be distributed to other committees, particularly "Media and public education" and "Government and public policy";

(c) Create a speakers' bureau with individuals and organizations that can address human rights issues in the occupied Palestinian territories. This resource is designed to be used by the constituent members of NACC;

(d) Publish the paper that was delivered at the committee (Humanitarian and human rights laws applicable to the occupied Palestinian territories: An overview of the principal instruments).

(e) Coordinate a conference call mechanism for both the human rights documentation organizations and the advocacy organizations.

(ii) Government policy

The Standing Committee on Government and Public Policy will help facilitate the work of the North American NGO movement in its efforts to influence the Governments of the United States and Canada to adopt a more just policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to implement international law and United Nations resolutions. In order to achieve this goal, the committee will compile accurate information and analysis about policy orientation and legislation especially in the Clinton Administration and the United States Congress, and disseminate this information to organizations in the NGO community that work to affect policy change.

The current United States Administration and Congress present both unique opportunities and unique challenges to the movement for Palestinian rights. We are aware that Democratic control of both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue could further tilt United States policy against the Palestinians. However, we do have some leverage to influence the debate. The recent changes in global power relationships and the ongoing economic decline in North America will make it difficult for policy makers to justify foreign aid allotments. This may be particularly true for Israel, given the Democratic Party's rhetorical emphasis on human rights, and the fact that polls indicate that the majority of Americans now recognize the egregious nature of the Israeli occupation and the need for a full recognition of the Palestinian right to self-determination.

The committee will study differences between United States and Canadian policy, help educate the NACC constituency on these differences, and develop means to encourage the most positive aspects of both.

The Standing Committee on Government and Public Policy plans to keep interested North American NGOs abreast of opportunities to make their voices heard. Where feasible, we will coordinate NGO interventions to ensure their maximum impact. The standing committee will pay particular attention to ongoing United States support for Israeli settlement expansion, to North American reactions - or lack of them - to Israeli human rights abuses, and to the role played by the United States in the Middle East peace talks.

This standing committee will assume responsibility for coordinating and developing NACC's congressional contact campaign, already under way. This committee will assume primary responsibility for NACC mailings to Congress and/or Parliament.

The standing committee proposed the following project:

A set of issue papers which aim to educate Congress and their staff as well as prepare constituents to meet with them. Paper topics include those which are relevant to Congress and are geared towards mobilizing their support behind NACC positions. Each paper would include a graphic illustration of the issue as well as a recommended action. The papers would promote recognition of the NACC/NGO movement and serve to unify American lobbying efforts. Papers are one page (two-sided), produced on high quality material:

- Settlements (road construction and land issues)
- United States aid (human rights regulations, increasing Palestinian aid);
- Human rights and international law;
- Negotiations (recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization, United States evenhandedness);
- Demilitarization;
- Refugees.

Also:

- A suggested sense of the Senate resolution;
- Congressional information (names, committees);
- Lobbying tips;
- NACC pamphlet.

Papers are ultimately collective efforts. However, original drafts may be prepared by NGOs and/or other organizations which have expertise on a particular issue. The project is to be coordinated by the standing committee.

Reproduction of materials may be funded by a grant and/or may be supplied at a minimal fee.

(iii) Public education and the media

The Standing Committee on Public Education and the Media will serve to inform constituents of specific examples of media bias or disinformation regarding Palestinians. Members of the committee will target a media outlet (television, newspaper, etc.) responsible for unfair or inaccurate reporting and utilize faxes, letters, phone calls, etc.

In this era of mass communications, it is impossible for everyone to read and watch everything. Members of the media standing committee should come from both the United States and Canada. This geographical diversity provides members with a unique means to keep abreast of a vast array of unfair or inaccurate media coverage specifically on the Palestinian struggle.

The symposium workshop will be the forum where the standing committee organizes itself. It is foreseen as a loose structure with participants connected by a Palestine media fax tree. Those signing onto the media fax tree will be connected to the activities of the standing committee. If one member discovers an offensive or mistaken news article, he or she will send it out on the media fax tree, preferably with a sample cover letter to the newspaper. Or if it was a news programme, he or she will describe its contents to other members. Committee members are then urged to follow up with their own letters

demanding corrections, retractions, etc. In short, members will engage in a series of "mini campaigns" focusing on specific articles, programmes, etc.

The Standing Committee on Public Education and the Media is a unique way for NGOs to interact with the media and press. The committee will consult and/or work with organizations such as the Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting Institute for Media Analysis and the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee's (ADC) Media Department. It will focus exclusively on the Palestinian struggle.

(iv) Material aid and economic development

The standing committee will encourage NGOs in North America to be involved in adopting programmes and policies in consultation and/or partnership with Palestinian institutions and groups in order to enable the emerging Palestinian State to proceed, develop and build in different areas, among them the agricultural, industrial, educational, economic, social and health-related areas.

Regarding NGOs in Palestine, the aims of the standing committee are to:

(a) Identify specific needs and projects in Palestine in different fields of development and geographic areas for which study, assistance, sponsorship, adoption, and/or partnership of NGOs in North America is requested;

(b) Make sure that such needs and projects are not already picked up by other NGOs nor by agencies or organizations working directly with institutions in Palestine and are coordinated with the Palestinian NGO Committee;

(c) Request the Palestinian NGO executive to classify such needs and projects according to the urgency and priority they deserve;

(d) Request the local NGO executive to make a statement about and put a dollar value to each project or item of need;

(e) Request the local NGO executive to suggest procedural and functional plans which will ensure the initial and continuing success and benefit of such needs and projects in the overall building of the State.

Regarding NGOs in North America, the aims of the standing committee are to:

(a) Ask NGOs to declare their initial interest and readiness to help in enabling the State and engage in assisting developmental projects;

(b) Request interested NGOs to study the list of needs and projects prepared by local NGOs in Palestine and choose the item which they wish to support;

(c) Request interested NGOs to state their policy regarding their assistance, sponsorship, adoption or partnership regarding a given project or item of need and the way they envisage their participation and support;

(d) Request interested NGOs to express their willingness to share their resources with other organizations in shouldering projects which are more demanding, financially or otherwise;

(e) Request interested NGOs to state the timing of their support of the specific need or project they choose.

(v) Mobilizing women's organizations

The objective of this committee is to act as a line with NGOs in North America for the purposes of:

(a) Outreach: coordinating and facilitating programmes, special projects and other activities in relation to women's concerns and issues;

(b) Developing educational materials for a future database on Palestinian women and for a resource centre;

(c) Monitoring the media regarding negative stereotyped images of Palestinian women;

(d) Linkage between Palestinian women inside and outside of Palestine through coordinated action-oriented programmes and delegations;

(e) Overseeing the social, cultural and economic needs of Palestinian women, via specific project coordination.

(vi) Mobilizing religious organizations

The purposes of this committee are:

(a) To maintain contact with religious communions and communities vis-à-vis the question of Palestine;

(b) To network among the religious communities for the sharing of common concerns, various statements, and to disseminate information;

(c) To develop common approaches and strategies for the promotion of justice, peace, freedom and reconciliation in Israel and Palestine;

(d) To work together to inform constituencies of developments in the region in order to organize appropriate responses;

(e) To assist NACC and, in turn, the United Nations, in developing appropriate responses to the situation in Israel/Palestine which will take into consideration the religious and moral dimensions of the issues involved.

(vii) Mobilizing labour

The coordinator will be responsible for coordinating the following actions for the labour NGOs and expanding their participation in the annual symposium:

(a) To organize a workshop on labour issues at the symposium;
(b) To build and expand labour participation at the annual symposium;
(c) To encourage labour NGOs to develop projects for occupied Palestine;
(d) To discuss publishing a labour bulletin to keep labour NGOs informed on news, views and current issues in occupied Palestine.

The standing committee will focus on building attendance from labour organizations at the symposium and continuing participation and representation in NGO activities. Efforts will be coordinated by the Canadian autoworkers leadership in Toronto, Canada. This will be a long-term effort.

Annex IV

MESSAGE TO THE SYMPOSIUM FROM H.E. MR. YASSER ARAFAT, CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION

Mr. Chairman of the Tenth United Nations North American Regional NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine,

Participants,

Friends and distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

On the occasion of this the tenth symposium on the question of Palestine being held by your fraternal organizations, I have the pleasure to offer to all of you, on my own behalf, on behalf of the members of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization and on behalf of the Palestinian people, the most sincere, warmest and most heartfelt greetings and best wishes for the success of your work.

I should like to convey to you, and through you to all our friends in the non-governmental organizations of North America, the gratitude and appreciation of the Palestinian people for your activities and endeavours in solidarity with it and in support of its just cause and legitimate national struggle for the restoration and exercise of its inalienable national rights as acknowledged by international legitimacy and by the United Nations, including its right to return, to exercise self-determination and to establish an independent State with its capital at Jerusalem.

You have, of course, been following the peace process that began at Madrid and the negotiations currently in progress. We have participated in them with sincerity and earnestness in fulfilment of our people's desire for a just peace in the region and in accordance with the decisions of the Palestine National Council, the Central Council and the executive organs of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Despite the disadvantageous conditions placed on our participation from the outset, we have made important concessions and shown genuine flexibility for the sake of their success. Regrettably, the negotiations continue to falter and are threatened by defeat because of Israel's failure to adhere to their terms of reference as embodied in the principles enunciated in President Bush's initiative and in the letter of invitation and assurances, namely, land for peace, the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), respect for the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, and security for all. Moreover, further complicating the negotiations, the Government of the United States of America and Israel made promises that they have failed to keep, such as those for the creation of a positive atmosphere by lifting the siege imposed on the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, for the improvement of the economic situation and standards of living in the area, for the return of deportees in

implementation of Security Council resolution 799 (1992), for respect for Palestinian human rights, and for a resumption of the dialogue with the PLO.

The situation in the occupied territories continues to deteriorate because of Israel's pursuit of the "iron-fist" policy and systematic State terrorism that includes oppression, repression, detention, murder, the destruction of property and crops, the demolition of homes, the closure of areas and their isolation from each other, and the complete isolation of Jerusalem to impose its status as the capital of Israel, a status that is rejected by our people and by the Arab, Islamic and Christian peoples of the world. Furthermore, the expropriation of land, the building of settlements, the violation of the human rights of the Palestinian people and outrage against Islamic and Christian holy places have continued. The Israeli human rights organization, B'tselem, has characterized the month of September, in which the ninth round of negotiations took place, as the bloodiest month thus far, and international organizations have condemned the violation of Palestinian human rights in their reports.

Despite this entire situation, the Palestinian people continues to strive diligently for the achievement of peace, security and stability for all in the region. It assures all of its friends and those forces that cherish freedom, justice and peace in North America and worldwide, that the peace that is desired for the Middle East region cannot be achieved and is not destined to succeed and to endure without respect for the resolutions relating to the question of Palestine and the application to all occupied Arab territory, including the City of Jerusalem, of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), or without acknowledgement of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people to return, to exercise self-determination and to establish an independent State.

The Palestinian people, as it continues to wage the most complex and difficult battle that the current negotiations represent, looks to you with the greatest hope and confidence, as friends and supporters of its just cause and legitimate struggle, to step up your activities in solidarity with it so as to help it and enable it to achieve the just peace it desires and fulfil its national aspirations to secure freedom, independence and national sovereignty like the other free peoples of the world.

I salute you warmly, and I assure you that we shall continue our struggle, with the support of the honest and upright people of the world, so as to achieve a just and honourable peace in our region which will guarantee and safeguard our people's freedom and national dignity.

Annex V

1993-1994 NORTH AMERICAN COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR NGOs ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
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Canadian Autoworkers Social Justice Fund
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Canada

Canadian Council of Churches
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Episcopal Church - United States of America
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Palestine Solidarity Committee
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United States of America

Presbyterian Church - United States of America
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United States of America

Union of Palestinian American Women
Leila Diab
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Bridgeview, IL 60455
United States of America

Annex VI

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS AND OBSERVERS

Participant NGOs

American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
American Educational Trust
American Friends Service Committee
American-Israeli Civil Liberties Coalition
American Neturei Karta - Friends of Jerusalem
Americans for Middle East Understanding
Association of Arab-American University Graduates
Canadian Arab Federation
Canadian Auto Workers
Canadian Council of Churches
Capital District Committee for Palestinian Rights
Christian Peace Conference
Church of Humanism
Council of Masajid of the United States of America, Inc.
Episcopal Church, United States of America
Federation of American-Arab Organizations
Friends Committee on National Legislation
General Board of Global Ministries - United Methodist Church
International Committee for Arab-Israeli Reconciliation
International Movement for Unity Among Races and Peoples
Jewish Peace Fellowship
Labor Committee on the Middle East
Louisville Committee for Israeli/Palestinian States
Madre, Inc.
Mercy Corps International - Middle East Program
Methodist Federation for Social Action
Middle East Fellowship of Southern California
Middle East Justice Network
National Association of Arab-Americans
National Committee for Independent Political Action
National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA - Middle East Office
National Lawyers Guild (Middle East Committee)
NECEF (Near East Cultural and Educational Foundation of Canada)
Palestine Aid Society
Palestine Human Rights Information Center - International
Palestine Solidarity Committee
Palestinian Federation of Women's Action Committees
Palestinian Mother and Child Care Society
Partners for Peace
Pax Christi (International)
Presbyterian Church, United States of America
Save the Children Federation
Union of Palestinian American Women
Union of Palestinian Women's Associations in North America

United Nations Association, United States of America
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
World Muslim Congress
World Organization of Jews from Islamic Countries
World Peace Council

Observer NGOs

Centre for Democracy and Human Rights
Loretto Community
Middle East Crisis Committee
Moral Re-Armament, Inc.
Palestinian Aid Revenue and Justice, Inc.
Pax World Service
World Vision USA

NGO coordinating committees

North American Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine
Palestine Committee for NGOs
International Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine

Panellists

Ms. Mia Adjali, Director of the United Methodist Office for the United Nations

Ms. Roni Ben Efrat, an Israeli peace activist; a founding member of "Women in Black" and a member of the editorial staff of Etgar/Challenge magazine

Mr. Don Betz, Chairman of the International Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine and Vice-President of University Relations at Northeastern State University, Oklahoma

Mr. Asmi Bishara, Professor of Philosophy at Bir Zeit University

Mr. Paul Findley, former member of the United States House of Representatives

Mr. Jim Graff, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Toronto and Vice-Chairman of NACC

Mr. Muhammad Hallaj, Director of the Centre for Policy Analysis on Palestine and a member of the Palestine National Council

Mr. Jonathan Kuttab, human rights lawyer and Director of the Mandela Institute for Political Prisoners in the West Bank

Mr. Atif Kubursi, Professor of Economics at McMaster University, Canada, and advisor on refugee issues to the Minister of External Affairs, Canada

Workshop facilitators and resource persons

Yasmin Adib
Laura Adjangba
Kim Deterline
Miriam Elahi
Roni Ben Efrat
Norman Finkelstein
Beth Goldring
Jim Graff
Roger Grande
Atif Kubursi
Jonathan Kuttab
Lesly Lempert
Peter Lems
Victor Makari
Colleen McGuire
Nancy Murray
Nancy Nye
Melissa Phillips
Karin Ryan
Hassan Yussuff

Members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

Afghanistan	H.E. Mr. Ravan A. G. Farhadi, Permanent Representative
Cuba	H.E. Mr. Alcibiades J. Hidalgo Basulto, Permanent Representative
Indonesia	Mr. Abdul Nasier, Minister Counsellor
Malta	H.E. Mr. Joseph Cassar, Permanent Representative Mr. Ivan Fsadni, Deputy Permanent Representative
Senegal	M. Seydina Omar Diop, First Counsellor
Sierra Leone	Mr. A. Dennis Turay, Third Secretary
Tunisia	Mr. Othman Jerandi, Counsellor
Turkey	Mr. Hayati Guven, Counsellor

Other Governments

Algeria	Mr. Kheireddine Ramoul, First Secretary
Bahamas	Mr. Freddié Tucker, Third Secretary
Bahrain	H.E. Mr. Muhammad Abdul Ghaffar, Permanent Representative Mr. Saeed Al-Faihani, First Secretary Mr. Ebrahim Al-Dosari, Third Secretary Mr. Ahmed Al-Dosari, Third Secretary
Bangladesh	Mr. Ismat Jahan, First Secretary

Benin	Mr. Georges Abiodun Whannou, Minister Counsellor
Burkina Faso	Mr. Mamadou Serme, First Counsellor
China	Mr. Xie Yun Liang, Second Secretary
Colombia	Ms. Claudia Castro, Adviser
Iraq	Mr. Qasim A. Shakir, Counsellor
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ibrahim Abdelaziz, Minister and Deputy Permanent Representative
Mexico	Ms. Marta Pena, Third Secretary
Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mohammad Shaheed, First Secretary

United Nations bodies and specialized agencies

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

Intergovernmental organizations

League of Arab States	H.E. Mr. Mahmoud Aboul Nasr, Permanent Observer
Organization of the Islamic Conference	Mr. Mohammad Peyrovi, Deputy Permanent Observer

Organizations having received a standing invitation to participate in the session and the work of the General Assembly as observers and maintaining permanent offices at Headquarters

Palestine	Mr. Nasser Al-Kidwa, Permanent Observer Mr. Riyad H. Mansour, Deputy Permanent Observer

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